

**DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION**

**PROPOSED HURDS CORNER ROAD RECONSTRUCTION
WELLS AND ELLINGTON TOWNSHIPS,
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

July 2004

Submitted to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3
Division of Federal Aid

Submitted by: Gosling Czubak Engineering Sciences, Inc.
On Behalf of the
Tuscola County Road Commission

Contact: Ms. Michele Zawerucha
1733 Mertz Road
Caro, Michigan 48723
Phone: (989) 673-2128
Fax: (989) 673-3294

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1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED OF PROJECT

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed Hurds Corner Road reconstruction with special regard to the taking of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Wildlife Management Area land that has a Federal interest. The Tuscola County Road Commission (TCRC) is proposing to expand the current right-of-way along Hurds Corner Road in Wells and Ellington Townships, Tuscola County, Michigan.

Hurds Corner Road is a National Highway System Federal Aid Route administered through Rural Task Force 7a. The purpose of the National Highway System (NHS) is to improve the grid of infrastructure to maintain homeland defense. Hurds Corner Road (in the project area – between Deckerville and Frankford Roads in Wells and Ellington Townships) is currently a secondary gravel road classified as a Class B road. North of Deckerville Road and south of Frankford Road, Hurds Corner Road is a paved road and classified as a Special Designated all season paved road. The TCRC proposes to improve all of Hurds Corner Road into a Special Designation all season paved road. This improvement would complete a link between Clifford Road at Lapeer County to Bay City Forestville Road at Huron County.

To accomplish this, the TCRC will need to purchase additional right-of-way (ROW) easements ranging from 17' to 67' from the MDNR in the Deford State Game Area. The additional right-of ways are required by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and for paved all season roads. The MDNR originally purchased the property with Federal Aid Assistance and will only accept the easement purchase after U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approval.

1.2 Need

The purpose of this document is to present the USFWS with sufficient information to determine the impact of the proposed action. It is the responsibility of the USFWS to prohibit the taking of wildlife lands purchased with Federal Aid funds unless there are no practical alternatives. If no practical alternatives exist, then the lands must be fully replaced and compensated for both in monetary and wildlife value.

The TCRC has evaluated alternative routes and determined that there is no practical alternative to avoiding the taking of MDNR lands. A discussion of alternative routes and the approximate amount of MDNR land necessary is presented in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2. The TCRC has also evaluated the possibility of reducing the ROW in the project area to avoid taking MDNR land; however, the NHS and MDOT require 100' right-of-ways for all season paved roads.

The TCRC has determined that the reconstruction of Hurds Corner Road and the resulting improved traffic flow will provide an infrastructure improvement for National defense and benefit the local population. The TCRC wishes to proceed with the reconstruction of Hurds Corner Road and provide properties of equal monetary and wildlife value for replacement purposes.

1.3 Decisions That Need to Be Made

The USFWS's regional director will select one of the alternatives analyzed in detail and will determine, based on the facts and recommendations contained herein, whether this Environmental Assessment (EA) is adequate to support a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) decision, or whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will need to be prepared.

1.4 Background

As discussed above, the proposed action is to expand the current right-of-way along Hurds Corner Road. The following paragraphs present information relating to the selection of Hurds Corner Road for improvements. The TCRC identified a need to improve traffic flow within the project vicinity in the mid-1990s. Local residents were complaining about high vehicle speeds and volume on gravel roads in the project area. Project planning began in late 1990s.

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction was selected by the TCRC as the most viable alternative based on the following factors: 1) large sections of the road were currently improved and only a small section of improvements (2.5 miles) would need to be made; 2) Hurds Corner Road is mapped as a NHS Federal Aid Route and NHS funds may be used on the reconstruction of the road; and 3) Hurds Corner Road provides a direct north-south route between Clifford and Bay City Forestville Roads.

Discussions with the MDNR about the purchase of the ROW easements began in 2000. The MDNR, Forest Management Division performed a field review of the proposed right-of-way acquisitions in October 2001. Although the final MDNR review has not been completed, the initial field review did not indicate any objections to the proposed project. Since MDNR originally purchased the property with federal assistance, USFWS Federal Assistance Division approval is required before the MDNR review can be finalized and the easement request approved.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.1 Alternatives Not Considered for Detailed Analysis

2.1.1 Dodge Road Alternative

The TCRC proposed to reconstruct Dodge Road from Clifford Road in Lapeer County to Bay City Forestville Road in Huron County. Dodge Road is mostly a Class B, gravel road. Also, Dodge Road is not contiguous between Clifford and Bay City Forestville Roads; therefore sections of new road would have to be constructed. For this proposed alternative, a large amount of ROW easements would need to be purchased from local residents to reconstruct Dodge Road to MDOT requirements. In addition, approximately 13 acres (from the Deford State Game Area) would need to be purchased from the MDNR. The proposed route is detailed on a map located in Attachment 1. Considering the cost to purchase additional ROW easements from the local population and the MDNR, and that a large number of acres from the Deford State Game Area would be affected, this alternative was dismissed from future consideration.

2.1.2 Murray Road Alternative

For this proposed alternative, Murray Road (1 mile west of Hurds Corner Road) would be used as an alternative route from Deckerville Road south to Riley Road. Traveling south on Hurds Corner Road, one would have to go west on Deckerville Road for 1 mile, south on Murray Road for three miles, and east on Riley Road for 1 mile before reconnecting to Hurds Corner Road. The proposed route is detailed on a map in Attachment 2.

The Murray Road alternative is not considered a viable option due to several factors. In 1951, the State of Michigan worked with the local agencies and mapped out a transportation system that became certified roads which receive state funding for maintenance. In the 1960's, the federal government took the certified road system and mapped out a NHS route for purposes of national defense. The NHS system has been and continues to be developed to State and Federal specifications using State and Federal Funds. Although Murray Road is paved, it was not constructed to these specifications. In order to bring it up to State and Federal specifications, the existing pavement would have to be removed and the road bed reconstructed, which would greatly increase the cost compared to the preferred alternative. Murray Road is not mapped as part of the NHS system. Therefore, NHS funds may not be used on the reconstruction of Murray Road and would make the reconstruction of Murray Road even more cost prohibitive.

In addition, the current ROW for Murray Road is 66'. To comply with MDOT requirements additional ROW easements would need to be purchased from local residents and the MDNR. Approximately 2.86 acres of the Deford State Game Area would need to be purchased and converted into ROW easements.

Considering the lack of NHS funds available for Murray Road, the cost to purchase additional ROW easements from the local population and the MDNR, the cost to reconstruct Murray Road, and that acreage from the Deford State Game Area would be impacted, this alternative was dismissed from future consideration.

2.2 Alternatives Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis

2.2.1 Alternative A: Proposed Action (Hurds Corner Road Reconstruction with Mitigation)

Hurds Corner Road is currently a Class B, gravel road with a ROW of 66'. This alternative would rebuild Hurds Corner Road from Deckerville Road to Frankford Road into a special designated all season, paved road. It would be capable of handling all season traffic at a posted speed of 55 mph. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) requires 100' right-of-ways for all season paved roads. To allow for the completion of this alternative, the TCRC is proposing to purchase additional ROW easements from the MDNR.

The additional ROW easements that need to be purchased from the MDNR for the completion of this alternative range from 17' to 67' in width, parallel to the existing ROW. Easements for the expanded ROW that need to be acquired from the MDNR cover a total of 5.37 acres. The necessary ROW expansion includes 9,289 linear feet of 17' width easement, 1,350 linear feet of 34' width easement and 450 linear feet of 67' width easement (Attachments 3 & 4). The 34' and 67' wide easement expansions are necessary to relocate a portion of the Hollister-Wright Drain to the east side of Hurds Corner Road. Currently, the Hollister-Wright Drain flows west under Hurds Corner Road south of Gilford Road, then north for several hundred feet, and then back east under Hurds Corner Road, north of Gilford Road. The easements obtained from the MDNR in these areas must be for both the road ROW and the county drain. A topographic map of the project area depicting the proposed route is located in Attachment 3. An aerial photograph of the project area detailing the proposed ROW acquisitions is located in Attachment 4.

This alternative would be conditioned upon appropriate action by the TCRC to minimize and mitigate anticipated impacts to natural resources, which include habitat loss and destruction (including 0.60 acres of wetlands). The TCRC would be required to 1) procure or fund the procurement of lands of equal monetary and wildlife value to mitigate loss of habitat; 2) prevent equipment from entering wetland areas (located on adjoining properties) by erecting barricades or storm fencing and constructing silt fencing around the wetland areas to prevent the deposition of sediments following exposure of soils and 3) reseed disturbed areas with a warm season grass for small game cover immediately following construction.

To compensate for the loss of habitat, the TCRC is negotiating with the MDNR to provide lands of equal monetary and wildlife value adjacent to other MDNR land within Tuscola County. The proposed replacement land is the Hutfilz pit property comprised of upland habitat adjacent to MDNR land. The Hutfilz property is located in Watertown Township, Tuscola County (T10N, R9E, S32). The public will be notified regarding any proposed replacement land changes. The final land replacement parcel will be subject to USFWS approval. Wetland mitigation will be performed under a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) permit.

2.2.2 Alternative B: No Action (No Hurds Corner Reconstruction)

For the purpose of this Environmental Assessment, this alternative can be defined as no new road improvements along Hurds Corner Road on any of the state lands that were acquired with Federal Aid assistance. This alternative would not require any special restrictions. The TCRC would lose its NHS funding and not complete the road improvement. Currently, the TCRC does not have any contingency plans if the USFWS does not approve of the ROW acquisition.

2.2.3 Alternative C: (Hurds Corner Reconstruction with no Mitigation)

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction project would occur without mitigation for habitat loss. The project would be conditioned as Alternative A, but the TCRC would not be required to provide mitigation for loss of habitat.

2.2.4 Summary of Actions by Alternative

	Alternative A (Proposed Action)	Alternative B (No Action)	Alternative C (Build W/No Mitigation)
Description	Purchase ROW easements. Improve Hurds Corner Road into all season paved road.	No improvements of Hurds Corner Road	Purchase ROW easements. Improve Hurds Corner Road into all season paved road.
Habitat Lost	5.37 acres (0.60 wetlands)	None	5.37 acres (0.60 wetlands)
Mitigation	Hutfilz Pit – upland habitat of equal monetary and wildlife value adjacent to current MDNR land. Wetland mitigation performed under MDEQ permit.	Not Applicable	None.
Costs	State and federal funding to cover an estimated 80% of the project costs. Hutfilz property owned by the TCRC. No additional land purchases for mitigation.	Loss of state and federal funding. No expenditures by TCRC.	Overall cost of the project would be reduced by allowing the TCRC to maintain ownership of the property currently being offered for replacement.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Physical Characteristics

This proposal affects the Deford State Game Area, located in southeast central Michigan, near Caro, Michigan.

According to the MDNR, the Deford State Game Area includes approximately 9,975 acres of lowland hardwoods, fields, and marshland. Woodlots vary in size from 40 to 600 acres. Dominant tree species are aspen, maple, and pine. Topography in the area is comprised of flat to gently rolling hills and contains numerous wetlands. The elevation varies from a high of 724 to a low of 718 feet above sea level.

Soils in the game area are in the Wixom-Wolcott-Pipestone association or the Pipestone-Granby-Chelsea association. Both soil types are nearly level to gently rolling, poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained sandy soils on outwash plains, moraines and/or lake plains or till plains. Groundwater is within six feet of the ground surface at most locations (Soil Survey of Tuscola County). Surface water runs to the many drainageways constructed in the area that flow to the Cass River located north of the project area. The

area has an average annual precipitation of 28.21 inches and an average temperature of 46.8 degrees Fahrenheit.

The game area is intensely managed for multiple uses including hunting, trapping, bird watching, hiking, and mushroom hunting.

3.2 Biological Environments

3.2.1 Habitat/vegetation

The Deford State Game Area is managed to provide multiple use opportunities including hunting, trapping, viewing, hiking, and mushroom hunting (MDNR). The game area is primarily wooded with a few open swales and low areas. The properties in the area of the project area consist of a variety of successional stages of habitat. The habitat is managed by controlled cuttings 2 to 10 acres in size in order to have four different age species of trees per 40 acres.

The dominant tree species are aspen, maple, and pine. Elm, oak, and choke cherry trees are also present. Other species of vegetation present in the area are red osier dogwood, sand bar willow, tag alders, honeysuckle, wild rose, bladder sedge, and various types of grasses.

The habitat in the area of the proposed ROW easements is heavily vegetated with the above mentioned species with some low-lying wet areas. Timbering has been completed in certain portions of the proposed ROW easement and young growth is established.

According to National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps for the area, wetlands are present throughout the Deford State Game Area. The dominant wetlands type is palustrine forested/scrub/shrub (symbol PFO/SS on the map). Refer to the NWI map in Attachment 5. The wetlands appear to be connected to the various drains in the area.

One federally listed wetland appears to be located in the proposed ROW easements (Wetland area #2). The wetland has been designated as a palustrine forested/scrub/shrub (PFO/SS) wetland and appears to be connected to the Hollister-Wright Drain, approximately ¼ mile to the east.

A wetland delineation was completed on the Hurds Corner Road corridor by Gosling Czubak Engineering Sciences, Inc. (GCES) on behalf of the TCRC. Five separate wetland areas totaling 0.60 acres were classified as wetlands as a result of the wetland delineation. The specific locations of each wetland area (labeled #1 through #5) are detailed in Attachment 6.

Three wetland plots and three upland plots were completed for the delineation. The wetland plots were completed in Wetland areas #1, #4, and #5. Wetland areas #2, #3, and #4 are in close proximity to one another and contain similar vegetation and soils,

therefore only one plot (in area #4) was completed for these areas. Wetland areas #1 through #4 are PFO/SS wetlands and consistent with the type of wetlands that are federally listed in the project area. Wetland area #5 (124 square feet) is classified as a riverine intermittent unconsolidated bottom cobble/gravel (R4UB1). The field collection forms from the wetland delineation that present vegetation types and soil characteristics are located in Attachment 7.

3.2.2 Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

The Michigan County Element List for Tuscola County (MDNR, 2003) was consulted to determine whether threatened or endangered species are present within the area surrounding the site. The state list contains five threatened and two endangered plant species, and three threatened and one endangered animal species present in Tuscola County. Several plants and animals were listed as "Special Concern". The federal list contains one threatened (prairie fringed orchid) plant species, and one threatened (bald eagle) animal species and no endangered plant species and no endangered animal species. Evidence of the any of the above-listed animal species was not observed during the site reconnaissance.

GCES on behalf of the TCRC has notified the MDNR Wildlife Division and the USFWS about the proposed project. A letter from the MDNR dated June 23, 2003, and a letter from the USFWS dated June 3, 2003 (both located in Attachment 8), indicates there are no threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, nor critical habitat within the project area, therefore, no listed species will be affected under any of the Alternatives.

3.2.3 Other Wildlife Species

A comprehensive wildlife survey was not completed for this EA. According to the MDNR, the following are the species commonly found in the project area:

Cottontail Rabbit	Whitetail Deer
Turkey	Raccoon
Fox Squirrel	Ruffed Grouse
Turkey Vulture	Red Winged Blackbird
Red Fox	Possum
Goose	Skunk
Crow	Robin
Chickadee	Garter Snake
Mouse	Mole

3.3 Land Use

The Deford State Game Area is managed toward the goal of providing quality hunting, trapping, hiking, and other compatible use opportunities without depleting the resource. The surrounding land use is primarily agriculture and residential.

3.4 Cultural/Paleontological Resources

GCES notified the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) by letter about the proposed project. The SHPO reviewed information concerning the subject property, and has determined that “no historic properties exist within the Area of Potential Effects for the project”, therefore no historic properties will be affected under any of the Alternatives. A letter from the SHPO dated June 20, 2003 is included as Attachment 9. Observations made during the site visit confirm the findings of the SHPO.

GCES also notified the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan to determine if the project area is a sacred site or traditional cultural property. A letter from the Tribe’s Historic Preservation Coordinator indicated that the tribe does not have any information concerning the presence of any Indian cultural properties or sacred sites in the vicinity of the project area. The letter is available in Attachment 10. No items of archeological significance were observed during a site reconnaissance.

3.5 Local Socio-economic Conditions

The project is being proposed in Wells and Ellington Townships, Tuscola County, Michigan. County population is 58,249 (2002 est.) The surrounding area is used for residential, agricultural, and recreational purposes. According to the Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation, manufacturing firms (located in Tuscola County and in the surrounding counties) are the largest employer in the county. Fifty-five manufacturing firms are located in Tuscola County, most of which manufacture automobile parts. Agriculture is the second largest employer in the County.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Alternative A: Proposed Action (Hurds Corner Road Reconstruction with Mitigation)

4.1.1 Habitat Impacts

The habitat in the area of the proposed ROW easements is heavily wooded with some low-lying wet areas. Timbering has been completed in certain portions of the proposed ROW easement and second growth has taken over. Approximately 5.37 acres of habitat will be lost as a result of the proposed action, (less than 0.0005 % of the state game area) and it is of marginal quality to wildlife considering its proximity to the current road. Approximately 4.63 acres of vegetative cover (area within existing ROW) also will be affected by the construction of the proposed development.

The reconstruction of the Hurds Corner Road will result in both temporary construction disturbances and a permanent loss of vegetation resources. The areas near the Hurds

Corner Road/Gilford Road intersection will be the most severely modified to allow for the relocation of the Hollister-Wright Drain. These areas would be reclaimed using native vegetation species following construction. In some areas, a conversion of one vegetation species to another would occur. For example, forested vegetation, including aspen that would be removed in the ROW, would be permanently converted to grassland.

Approximately 0.60 acres of wetlands would be lost as a result of the Hurds Corner Road reconstruction. These wetlands also appear to be connected to the Hollister-Wright Drain. A permit will be required through the MDEQ for all wetland modifications.

It is anticipated that the construction of the road and drainage features can be completed without impacting the wetland areas located on the adjoining properties. During construction activity, there is a potential for erosion of exposed soils and deposition in wetlands. There is also a potential for damage to wetlands by equipment used during the construction. Mitigation measures include preventing equipment from entering wetland areas by erecting barricades or storm fencing and constructing silt fencing around the wetland areas to prevent the deposition of sediments from the site following exposure of soils.

Traffic on the newly constructed roadway would increase. According to a 1997 traffic study by the TCRC, the ADT on Hurds Corner Road is 260 vehicles (10% commercial) per day. The traffic rate is anticipated to be 460 vehicles per day in 2017. The increase of traffic rates and speeds would further fragment the habitat and hinder wildlife movement across the roadway. Animal/vehicle collisions would also increase.

To compensate for the loss of habitat, the TCRC is negotiating with the MDNR to provide lands of equal monetary and wildlife value adjacent to other MDNR land within Tuscola County. The proposed replacement land is the Hutfilz pit property comprised of upland habitat adjacent to MDNR land. The Hutfilz property is located in Watertown Township, Tuscola County (T10N, R9E, S32). A map depicting the location of the Hutfilz property is found in Attachment 11. The public will be notified regarding any proposed replacement land changes. The final land replacement parcel will be subject to USFWS approval. Wetland mitigation will be performed under a MDEQ permit.

4.1.2 Biological Impacts

The proposed development will involve clearing vegetation at the project site. However, there will be no impact to threatened, endangered, or special concern plant species. Furthermore, there will be no demonstrable adverse impact to the character of the site, in relation to existing plant communities.

The most severe wildlife impact in the vicinity of the proposed action will be realized as a result of habitat loss. Traffic on the newly constructed roadway would increase which would further fragment the habitat and hinder wildlife movement across the roadway. Animal/vehicle collisions would also increase. However, according to the MDNR, no significant biological impacts would occur as a result of the proposed action.

Replacement land is being offered by the TCRC to help minimize this impact.

4.1.3 Listed Species

There are no known listed species; therefore no impacts are expected.

4.1.4 Cultural Resources

There are no known cultural resources; therefore no impacts are expected.

4.1.5 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are not anticipated. As referenced in Section 3.5, the surrounding property use is currently residential, agricultural, and recreational. A section of Hurds Corner Road to the north of the project area has been redeveloped from a secondary gravel road to an all season paved road within the past ten years and additional economic and population growth has not been observed in this area. In addition, a large percentage of the surrounding properties in the project area are state owned and will prohibit additional growth. There is currently no evidence to suggest that the proposed project will lead to additional economic or population growth in the project area.

4.1.6 Cost Impacts

The TCRC has acquired state and federal funding to cover an estimated 80% of the project costs. The remaining 20% of the cost will be provided by the TCRC. To compensate for the loss of habitat, the TCRC is negotiating with the MDNR to provide lands of equal monetary and wildlife value adjacent to other MDNR land within Tuscola County. The additional cost impacts anticipated for the purchase of any replacement properties are minimal because the proposed mitigation property (Hutfilz property) is owned by the TCRC. No additional land purchases for replacement parcels are anticipated at this time.

4.1.7 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 59 Federal Register 7629 (1994), directs federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice in their decision making process. Federal agencies are directed to identify and address as appropriate, any disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority or low-income populations.

No environmental justice issues exist for any of the alternatives. The property is currently unoccupied and unused for agricultural, industrial or any other economic activity. None of the alternatives would create any environmental pollution. No minority

or low-income populations would be displaced or negatively affected in any other way by the proposed action or any other way.

4.2 Alternative B: No Action (No Hurds Corner Road Reconstruction)

4.2.1 Habitat Impacts

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.2.2 Biological Impacts

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.2.3 Listed Species

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.2.4 Cultural Resources

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.2.5 Cumulative Impacts

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.2.6 Cost Impacts

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore the state and federal funding acquired for the project will be lost. No cost impacts are anticipated.

4.2.7 Environmental Justice

The Hurds Corner Road reconstruction would not be completed; therefore there will be no impacts.

4.3 Alternative C: (Hurds Corner Road Reconstruction with no Mitigation)

4.3.1 Habitat Impacts

Same as Alternative A, except there would be no mitigation or compensation measures undertaken by the TCRC. The net result would be the loss of 5.37 acres of habitat.

4.3.2 Biological Impacts

Same as Alternative A, except there would be no mitigation or compensation measures undertaken by the TCRC. The net result would be the loss of 5.37 acres of habitat.

4.3.3 Listed Species

Same as Alternative A.

4.3.4 Cultural Resources

Same as Alternative A.

4.3.5 Cumulative Impacts

The result would be the loss of 5.37 acres of habitat.

4.3.6 Cost Impacts

The construction of Hurds Corner Road would be completed; however, the TCRC would not have to provide lands for mitigation. This alternative would reduce the overall cost of the project by allowing the TCRC to maintain ownership of the property currently being discussed for replacement.

4.3.7 Environmental Justice

Same as Alternative A.

4.4 Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternatives

	Alternative A (Proposed Action)	Alternative B (No Action)	Alternative C (Build W/No Mitigation)
Habitat Impacts	<p>A loss of 5.37 acres of habitat including 0.60 acres of wetlands.</p> <p>Increased traffic.</p> <p>Lands of equal monetary and wildlife value provided for replacement (Hutfilz property). Subject to USFWS approval.</p>	<p>None, no habitat modification.</p>	<p>A loss of 5.37 acres of habitat including 0.60 acres of wetlands.</p> <p>Increased traffic.</p> <p>No mitigation.</p>
Biological Impacts	<p>Habitat Loss.</p> <p>Lands of equal monetary and wildlife value provided for replacement (Hutfilz property). Subject to USFWS approval.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>Habitat Loss.</p>
Listed Species	<p>No known resources.</p>	<p>No known resources</p>	<p>No known resources.</p>
Cultural Resources	<p>No known resources.</p>	<p>No known resources.</p>	<p>No known resources.</p>
Cost Impacts	<p>State and federal funding to cover an estimated 80% of the project costs. The remaining 20% of the cost will be provided by the TCRC. Proposed mitigation property is owned by the TCRC. No additional land purchases for replacement lands are anticipated at this time.</p>	<p>Loss of state and federal funding.</p>	<p>Overall cost of the project would be reduced by allowing the TCRC to maintain ownership of the property currently being offered for replacement.</p>

5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Sean F. Craven, Gosling Czubak Engineering Sciences, Inc., Traverse City, Michigan

Peter R. Kallioinen, Gosling Czubak Engineering Sciences, Inc., Traverse City, Michigan

Kevin D. Ringwelski, Gosling Czubak Engineering Sciences, Inc., Traverse City,
Michigan

6.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC AND OTHERS

A public hearing for the project was conducted by the Tuscola County Road Commission on March 13, 2003. Members of the public and local landowners were invited to the hearing to express their opinions or concerns and provide comments on the project. No members of the public attended the hearing.

In addition, all privately held ROW's in the project area were acquired from March 2001 and November 2003. No objections to the proposed project were raised by landowners.

A table of governmental personnel contacted about the proposed project is provided below.

Person/Agency Contacted	Comments
Scott Whitcomb Michigan Department of Natural Resources	Provided information on project
Lori Sargent Michigan Department of Natural Resources Endangered Species Specialist	Provided information on federally threatened and endangered resources
Jeff Gosse United States Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Division	Provided information for environmental and 4(f) issues
Jon Parker United States Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Division	Provided information for environmental and 4(f) issues
Craig Czarnecki United State Fish and Wildlife Service Lansing Field Office	Provided information on federally threatened and endangered resources
Arnie Karr Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Biologist	Provided information on the Deford State Game Area.
Martha MacFarlane Michigan State Historic Preservation Office Environmental Review Coordinator	Provided information on historic properties in project area
Jim McCloskey Tuscola County Economic Development Corp.	Provided information about economic conditions in Tuscola County.
Kayle Crampton The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe Historic Preservation Coordinator	Provided information about Native American traditional properties and sacred sites

7.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSE

This section will be completed after the public comment period.

8.0 REFERENCES CITED

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